Development funding for backward districts

3898. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to increase development funding for the backward districts across the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof *inter alia* indicating the proposed increase in the development funding for the backward districts of Orissa State especially the KBK region of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) was approved in 2006-07 to bring about focused development of identified backward districts by implementation of programmes selected through people's participation. The BRGF has two components, namely, Districts Component covering 250 districts including 147 districts covered by the erstwhile Rasthriya Sam Vikash Yojana (RSVY); and the Special Plans for Bihar and the KBK districts of Orissa. An allocation of Rs. 5000 crore was made for BRGF for 2006-07. This allocation has been enhanced to Rs. 5800 crore during 2007-08. The Backward Districts Initiative (BDI) of the erstwhile RSVY covered only five districts of Orissa as against 19 districts of Orissa, including eight districts of KBK region, covered under the Districts Component of BRGF. The allocation for Orissa under RSVY/ BRGF was Rs. 325 crore in 2006-07. In 2007-08, the allocation is Rs. 454.26 crore including Rs. 250 crore for the KBK districts.

Effective utilization of resources

3899. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are making any efforts to manage the population to achieve good growth rate by utilizing the resources effectively;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps to be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government recognises the importance of managing the population to achieve good growth rate by effectively utilizing available resources and improve the quality of lives of people. Stabilizing population is important for promoting sustainable development with more equitable distribution. However, managing and stabilization of population is a function of making child and reproductive health care accessible and affordable for all, increasing the provision and outreach of primary and secondary education and removing gender bias, extending basic amenities including sanitation, safe drinking water and housing, besides empowering women and enhancing their employment opportunities.

The National Population Policy, 2000 (NPP 2000) provides a policy framework for advancing goals and prioritizing strategies to meet the reproductive and child health needs of the people, and to achieve net replacement levels (Total Fertility Rate, TFR) by 2010. The immediate objective of NPP 2000 is to address the unmet needs for contraception, health care infrastructure and health personnel, and to provide integrated service delivery for basic reproductive and child health care. The medium-term objective is to bring the TFR to replacement levels by 2010, through vigorous implementation of inter-sectoral operational strategies. The long-term objective is to achieve a stable population by 2045, at a level consistent with the requirements of sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.

Recognizing the importance of health for social and economic development and for improving the quality of life, the Government of India launched the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in 2005. Provision of accessible, affordable, accountable, effective and reliable primary health care facilities especially to the poor and vulnerable sections of the population, bridging the gap in rural health care services through creation of a cadre of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), improved hospital care, decentralized planning, intersectoral convergence, maintaining gender balance and ensuring population stabilization constitute the basic features of the NRHM. The NRHM also includes the second phase of Reproductive and Child Health Programme, which intends to improve the performance of family welfare for reducing maternal and infant morbidity and mortality,

and unwanted pregnancies. These initiatives are likely to provide the right impetus for improving the health & family welfare services, and hasten process of population stabilization in the country.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which is a national flagship programme of the Government of India, is the vehicle for operationalising the strategy for universal elementary education in the country. The programme seeks to open new schools in uncovered habitations, augment school infrastructure through provision of additional classrooms, toilets, drinking water, etc. The aim is to provide elementary education to all children in the 6-14 years age-group by 2010.

Proposal to govern regulatory organisations

3900. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering the proposal that would govern regulatory organizations, such as SEBI, TRAI and IRDA;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) to what extent such a policy decision by the Planning Commission for stablishment of multi-sector regulator would benefit Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) The National Common Minimum Programme states, *inter alia,* that 'all regulatory institutions will be strengthened to ensure that competition is free & fair. These institutions will be run professionally.'

In regard to the above NCMP item, the Planning Commission was asked to prepare a paper on the regulatory framework for infrastructure sector.

A consultation paper on 'Approach to Regulation of Infrastructure-Issues and Options' has since been prepared and a copy of the paper has been put on the websites of the Planning Commission: www.planningcommission.gov.in and the Committee on Infrastructure: www.infrastructure.gov.in for comments of the stakeholders, experts, etc.

(c) This paper analyses the rationale for regulation, surveys the existing regulatory institutions with respect to their roles, scope and identifies the